

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 AID-20 OMB-01 PC-04 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

DRC-01 HEW-08 NEA-10 AGR-20 SWF-02 SCI-06 /207 W

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R 281412Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9629

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CONAKRY 0459

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : ILO XA GV

SUBJECT : AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE

REF: CONAKRY 0419 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: TWELFTH CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS WAS HELD IN CONAKRY FROM MARCH 18-24. AGENDA AND RESOLUTIONS LARGELY REFLECTED GUINEAN DESIRES, AS EXPRESSED BY PRESIDENT TOURE IN OPENING SPEECH, WITH RESOLUTIONS SOMEWHAT MODDER-ATED IN SEVERAL CASES. PRINCIPAL RESOLUTIONS ENCOURAGE STRENGTHENING OF ORGANIZATION FOR THE UNITY OF AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (OUSA), FAVOR EXPULSION OF PORTUGAL FROM ILO, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REQUEST REORGANIZATION OF ILO, HCALL FOR MEASURES TO STOP

BRAIN DRAIN FROM AFRICA AND IMPROVE CONDITIONS OF AFRICANS WORKING ABROAD, SUPPORT CANDIDACY OF MOROCCAN LABOR MINISTER AS NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE ILO AND REQUEST ASSISTANCE FOR COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY DROUGHT. WORK OF CONFERENCE HALTED FOR NEARLY ONE DAY DUE TO UNPUBLISHED STRIKE OF OAU STAFF WHO CLAIMED THEY HAD NOT BEEN PAID BY GUINEAN GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. AT INVITATION GUINEAN GOVERNMENT TWELFTH SESSION OF AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS WAS HELD IN CONAKRY MARCH 18-24. GUINEANS CLAIM 39 OF 42 MEMBERS PARTICIPATED WITH SENEGAL, IVORY COAST AND MALAWI ABSENT, DESPITE INVITATIONS FROM OAU AND SPECIAL INVITATIONS FROM GUINEANS. MEETINGS OPENED WITH SPEECH BY PRESIDENT TOURE (REFTEL) WHICH WAS LATER ADOPTED AS WORKING DOCUMENT FOR CONFERENCE. GUINEAN MINISTER OF LABOR DIALLY PRESIDED. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS DISCUSS RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY CONGRESS. SO FAR AS EMBASSY CAN FIND OUT RESOLUTIONS WERE NOT PRINTED UP IN TIME FOR DEPARTURE OF DELEGATES AND HAVE ONLY BEEN READ OUT ON GUINEAN RADIO.

3. SYMPOSIUM: FIRST RESOLUTION CALLED ON SECRETARY GENERAL OF OAU TO INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE SYMPOSIUM ON WORKING CONDITIONS IN COLONIES AND MINORITY RULED REGIMES. SYMPOSIUM WOULD BE PLANNED IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY TO ONE OF THESE AREAS.

4. OUSA: LARGELY DUE TO GUINEA'S URGING, MEETING CALLED ON OAU TO INCREASE SUBSIDY TO AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION OUSA FROM \$200,000 TO \$600,000 MINIMUM AND TO MAKE GREATER EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE ALL AFRICAN LABOR UNIONS TO JOIN THIS ORGANIZATION. RESOLUTION FURTHER SUPPORTED IDEA OF NEXT MEETING OF OUSA BEING HELD IN ACCRA. IN SPEECH ON MARCH 25, PRESIDENT TOURE SEVERELY CRITICIZED AFRICAN UNIONS WHO WERE NOT WILLING TO JOIN.

4. PORTUGAL: AGAIN AT GUINEA'S STRONG URGING AND DESPITE OBJECTIONS ON LEGAL GROUNDS FROM SOME DELEGATES, MINISTERS AGREED TO PRESENT A RESOLUTION AT THE JUNE CONFERENCE OF THE ILO CALLING FOR THE EXPULSION OF PORTUGAL FROM THE ILO UNTIL INDEPENDENCE IS GRANTED TO PORTUGUESE COLONIES. SOME DELEGATIONS HAD OBJECTED THAT THERE IS NO PROVISION IN ILO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHARTER FOR SUCH EXPULSION.

5. TURIN CENTER: LENGTHY RESOLUTION CALLS FOR REINVIGORATION AND RESTRUCTURING OF TURIN CENTER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF AFRICANS MORE ADEQUATELY. THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER WAS INVITED TO ESTABLISH MORE CONTACTS WITH AFRICANS AND TO CREATE REGIONAL SUB-CENTERS IN AFRICA. OAU WAS REQUESTED TO SEND DELEGATION TO TURIN TO FIND WAYS OF IMPROVING CENTER'S EFFICIENCY AND

INCREASING ITS BUDGET.

6. TRAINING OF FACTORY INSPECTORS: LACK OF TRAINED FACTORY INSPECTORS WAS NOTED AS SEVERE HANDICAP AND OAU SECRETARY GENERAL WAS CALLED ON TO FIND WAY TO SET UP REGIONAL TRAINING CENTERS FOR FACTORY INSPECTORS AND TO WORK WITH ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT TO PREPARE FOR CONFERENCE THAT WILL FURTHER DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM.

7. ILO: THE OAU SECRETARY GENERAL WAS ASKED TO WORK OUT A COMMON AFRICAN POSITION FOR THE NEXT ILO MEETING AND TO CONSIDER PRESIDENT TOURE'S IDEA FOR REORGANIZING THE ILO SO AS TO PROVIDE EQUAL REPRESENTATION FOR SOCIALIST, CAPITALIST AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN PLACE OF THE PRESENT GEOGRAPHICAL ORGANIZATION (REFTEL). TOURE'S CRITICISM OF ILO FOR HIRING PEOPLE WITHOUT GETTING THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN WAS INCLUDED IN MUTED FORM. DELEGATES WITH WHOM EMBOFFS HAVE TALKED SAID TOURE'S CASE IS WEAK AS GUINEANS TOURE REFERRED TO WERE ENGAGED BY ILO TO FILL JOBS NOT SUBJECT TO NATIONAL QUOTAS.

8. SOCIAL SECURITY: RESOLUTION PASSED ON SOCIAL SECURITY PROPOSES ACTION TO ESTABLISH RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND CALLS FOR COMMON AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR AN AFRICAN CANDIDATE AS NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY: THE OAU SECRETARY GENERAL WAS CALLED ON TO ESTABLISH NEW AND STRONGER HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS, TO ENCOURAGE COOPERATION ON ESTABLISHMENT OF THESE STANDARDS, AND TO HELP TRAIN NEW TECHNICIANS TO ENFORCE THEM.

10. "HI-JACKING" OF AFRICAN WORKERS: ACCUSING INDUSTRIALIZED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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12. ARAB WORKERS CONFEDERATION: CONFERENCE ENCOURAGED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ARAB WORKERS CONFEDERATION AND THE OUSA. THE SECRETARY OF THE OAU WAS CALLED ON TO UNDERTAKE THE NECESSARY COORDINATION AND TO ESTABLISH CONTACT FOR THIS PURPOSE.

13. DROUGHT: AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE, THE ILO, FRIENDS OF AFRICA, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE CALLED ON TO REINFORCE AID TO ASSIST THE VICTIMS OF THE DROUGHT AND TO
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DEAL WITH THE CONDITIONS CAUSING THE DROUGHT.

14. ATMOSPHERICS: ACCORDING TO SEVERAL AFRICAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE, ON MARCH 24, THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE WAS INTERRUPTED BY A STRIKE OF THE OAU INTERNATIONAL STAFF WHO HAD COME FROM ADDIS. THESE SAME SOURCES REPORTED THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE HESITATION AND DISCUSSION AMONG STAFF MEMBERS PRIOR TO COMING TO CONAKRY BECAUSE THE OAU INTERNATIONAL STAFF WHO HAD COME IN JANUARY FOR THE DEFENSE COMMISSION MEETING HAD NEVER BEEN PAID THEIR ALLOWANCES IN FOREIGN CURRENCY WHICH IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOST COUNTRY. WHEN THEY CAME AND STILL COULD NOT GET PAID, THEY REFUSED TO WORK. WORK WAS FINALLY RESUMED WHEN THE GUINEAN GOVERNMENT PAID HALF OF THE SUM OWED AND CALLED ON THE OAU TO PAY THE REST. THE TOTAL AMOUNT INVOLVED WAS ONLY US\$2500 BUT IN ADDITION TO BEING SHORT OF FOREIGN CURRENCY, GUINEA IS ALSO VERY HOSPITABLE AND LODGES AND FEEDS ALL CONFERENCE VISITORS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE GUINEAN GOVERNMENT AND MAY HAVE FELT THIS WAS SUFFICIENT. ACCORDING TO ONE PARTICIPANT, THE GUINEANS BLAMED A SENEGALESE OF THE STAFF FOR

INSTIGATING THE STRIKE.

15. REACTIONS: SEVERAL DELEGATIONS COMMENTED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT THEY WERE UNHAPPY WITH THE HIGH-HANDED MANNER IN WHICH PRESIDENT TOURE AND THE GUINEAN LABOR MINISTER ATTEMPTED TO HAVE TOURE'S VIEWS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING. THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION PARTICULARLY TO THE GUINEAN'S EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THE OUSA AND TO CALL FOR THE EXPULSION OF PORTUGAL. SOME OF TOURE'S COMMENTS CRITICIZING WORKING CONDITIONS AND UNIONS IN LESS RADICALLY ORIENTED COUNTRIES WERE ALSO BADLY RECEIVED. IN SPEECH TO MASS RALLY CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARY OF GUINEA'S ONLY LABOR UNION, TO WHICH ALL DELEGATES WERE INVITED, PRESIDENT TOURE SAID CONAKRY MEETING HAD BEEN BEST LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE THUS FAR, FROM STAND-POINT OF HIGH LEVEL OF DELEGATES AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS. THIS, TOURE SAID, IS INDICATION AFRICANS BECOMING MORE CONSCIOUS OF NEED TO WORK TOGETHER. PRESIDENT ALSO MADE HIS USUAL COMMENT THAT DELEGATES PROBABLY CAME HERE THINKING THEY WOULD FIND EMPTY SHELVES AND STARVING PEOPLE BUT HAD BEEN ABLE TO SEE AND JUDGE FOR THEMSELVES.

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